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Prime Minister's schedule, November 16, 2009

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
November 15, 2009 (local time)

Morning Top-level breakfast meeting on climate change at Shangri-la Hotel in Singapore.

a.m. Casual conversation with South Korean President Lee Myung Bak. APEC summit at the presidential palace.

Noon APEC leaders statement released

p.m. Met with Russian President Medvedev at the Regent Singapore in Singapore. Interview with various media organizations at Four Seasons Hotel. Left Singapore International Airport by government plane.

November 16, 2009 (Japan time)

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00:28 Arrived at Haneda Airport.

01:03 Arrived at the official residential quarters.

4) President Obama delivers speech in Tokyo; U.S. to increase its involvement in Asia centering on alliance with Japan

MAINICHI (Top play) (Excerpt)
Evening, November 14, 2009

U.S. President Barack Obama delivered a speech on the United States' policy toward Asia at Suntory Hall in Minato, Ward, Tokyo, on the morning of Nov. 14. The President made clear his stance of increasing the United States' commitment to Asia centered on the Japan-U.S. alliance, stating, "I will aim at restoring the United States' leadership in the Asia-Pacific region through a revitalized alliance between the United States and Japan." The Obama administration's comprehensive Asia policy has been announced for the first time through this "Tokyo speech." In that respect, it can be defined as an important speech on par with such speeches as the one delivered in Prague in April, in which the President called for a nuclear-free world.

5) President Obama says in Tokyo speech he will demand explanation from North Korea on abductions, indicating support for Japan

NIKKEI (Page 1) (Full)
Evening, November 14, 2009

In a speech in Tokyo, U.S. President Barack Obama said that the normalization of diplomatic relations between North Korea and its neighbors is premised on a "full accounting" of the abduction of Japanese nationals. He also demanded that North Korea return to the Six-Party Talks on the nuclear issue.

This is the first time that the President has expressed an explicit opinion on the abduction issue and indicated his support for Japan's position. It appears that this statement was made out of consideration for Japan as U.S.-DPRK talks are about to begin shortly.

Obama demanded North Korea's return to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime and said that the DPRK's "full normalization of relations with its neighbors (Japan and South Korea) can only come if Japanese families receive a full accounting of the Japanese abductees."

Shigeo Iizuka, chairman of the association of families of abduction victims, and Shigeru and Sakie Yokota applauded the President's statement. The abduction issue was not discussed at the summit meeting with Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama on Nov. 13.

6) U.S. President Obama's speech "not entirely satisfactory," says Consumer Affairs Minister Fukushima

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)
November 15, 2009

Mizuho Fukushima, state minister for consumer affairs, attended U.S. President Barack Obama's speech delivered on Nov. 14. Fukushima said to reporters in reference to the President's speech: "There was no specific reference to such key issues as U.S. bases in Japan. Frankly speaking, the speech was not entirely satisfactory. What he

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said in his speech about U.S. service personnel maintaining peace in the region was understandable, but the speech included other aspects that were questionable."

7) Obama speech wins high praise

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
November 15, 2009

Deputy Prime Minister and State Minister for National Policy Naoto Kan on Nov. 14 highly praised U.S. President Obama's speech, which gave the big picture of U.S. policy toward Asia, noting, "(President Obama), born in the Pacific region, has strong feelings toward Asia. I was deeply moved by his speech." Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe pointed out, "He has repeated that the U.S. presence in Asia will remain unchanged, presumably from the desire to remove the tension with the Hatoyama administration."

8) President Obama says in Tokyo speech he will demand explanation from North Korea on abductions, indicating support for Japan

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9) Gist of PM Hatoyama's speech on Asia policy in Singapore on November 15

ASAHI (Page 3) (Full)
November 16, 2009

Today there is no doubt about the importance of Asia. The integration of the real economy is taking place in Asia. ASEAN, China, South Korea, and other nations have begun to play a constructive role for the region and for the international community.

The United States' presence plays an important role for peace and prosperity in Asia. It will continue to do so in the future. This is the main reason the Japan-U.S. alliance is the linchpin of Japan's

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foreign policy. President Obama and I have agreed to further deepen the alliance relationship. I welcomed President Obama's speech in

Tokyo in which he reaffirmed the United States' involvement in Asia.

The new government in Japan declares an Asia-focused foreign policy. At the center of this policy is the concept of an East Asian Community. The experience of reconciliation and cooperation in Europe is the model for my concept. Under the principle of "open regional cooperation," various countries will promote cooperation in different areas and spread through the region multilayered networks of functional communities.

Next year, Japan will open Self-Defense Forces vessels to civilians as "yuai (fraternity) boats" for medical activities and cultural exchange. We will be able to offer cooperation in areas including nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, cultural exchange, social security, and urban development. Dialogue on political cooperation is possible in the future. All countries who share these ideals and dreams can become members of the community.

"People" are the most important key to moving forward the concept of the East Asian Community. I call for active debate on the ideal framework for the community.

10) Prime minister welcomes U.S. stance of involvement with Asia

NIKKEI (Page 1) (Excerpt)
November 16, 2009

Shunsuke Oba, Singapore

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama on November 15 delivered a speech on his Asia policy after the closure of the APEC summit. Referring to U.S. President Obama's speech on Asia, he said, "The U.S. stance of involvement with Asia has been reaffirmed. Along with all of you, I welcome this." Concerning his initiative for an East Asian Community, the prime minister indicated his intention to have civilians carry out medical activities and other operations aboard Self-Defense Force vessels in a "Fraternity Boat project" in 2010.

11) Futenma working group discussions not premised upon relocation to Nago: Hatoyama

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Abridged)
November 15, 2009

Tetsuya Furuta

SINGAPORE-Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama clarified yesterday that discussions by a ministerial working group of the Japanese and U.S. governments, which is to meet over the pending issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Ginowan, Okinawa Prefecture, will not necessarily be premised upon the current plan to relocate Futenma airfield to a coastal area of Camp Schwab in the prefecture's northern coastal city of Nago, which is based on an intergovernmental agreement reached between Japan and the United States in 2006. At the same time, Hatoyama also indicated that he would not adhere to the idea of trying to reach a conclusion within the year. He made these remarks here in Singapore at an informal meeting with accompanying reporters.

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U.S. President Obama, in his speech yesterday in Tokyo, touched on his talks with Hatoyama over the Futenma issue and indicated a stance of calling for the current plan to be translated into action at an early stage. "We've agreed to implement the intergovernmental agreement promptly through the working group," Obama said.

Meanwhile, Hatoyama said, "I suppose President Obama would like to think that the bilateral agreement is the premise, but if the answer is given already, it's meaningless to set up such a working group." As seen from this remark, Hatoyama differs from Obama on the Futenma issue.

Hatoyama agreed with Obama to resolve the Futenma issue at an early

stage. However, Hatoyama said he did not promise to do so by the end of the year. Furthermore, he touched on Nago city's mayoral election scheduled for next January. "I wouldn't say I will not give any consideration to the mayoral election," he said.

12) Futenma ministerial-level working group likely to hold first meeting tomorrow

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
November 16, 2009

Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada stated at a press conference yesterday in Naha City that the first meeting of a ministerial-level working group on the issue of the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma comprising foreign and defense officials of Japan and the United States will be held as early as this week. According to a senior defense ministry official, the first session will likely be held on Nov. 17.

The foreign and defense ministers of the two countries will serve as the chief delegates. However, Ambassador John Roos is expected to participate in the first meeting on behalf of the secretaries of state and defense from the U.S. side.

13) Foreign minister calls for conclusion to Futenma issue before year's end, exposing difference from view of PM

NIKKEI (Page 1) (Excerpt)
November 16, 2009

Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada visited Okinawa on Nov. 15 for the first time since taking office. In Okinawa the foreign minister held a series of meetings with Gov. Hirokazu Nakaima, prefectural assembly representatives, Nago Mayor Yoshikazu Shimabukuro, and others to discuss the issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station (in Ginowan). He also toured the coastal area of Camp Schwab (in Nago), the relocation site for Futenma under the existing plan. In his meeting with the Nago mayor, the foreign minister said, "In view of the budget request, I would like to reach a conclusion before the end of the year," expressing the view that a decision must be made before the Nago mayoral election next January.

14) U.S. President Obama meets with Emperor, Empress over lunch

SANKEI (Page 3) (Full)
November 15, 2009

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The Emperor and the Empress hosted a luncheon for visiting U.S. President Obama at noon on Nov. 14 at the Imperial Residence in the Imperial Palace. This was the first time for the Emperor and the Empress to meet with the President.

Upon arriving at the Imperial Residence by car, the President shook hands with the Emperor and said, "I am very pleased to meet you, Your Majesties. I am very honored." He then bowed many times. The Emperor and the Empress greeted the President with smiles.

According to a source connected with the Imperial Household Agency, the luncheon was attended by the Emperor, the Empress, and the President alone with only one interpreter present.

When top foreign leaders visit Japan, a meeting with the Emperor in the Imperial Palace is normally arranged. However, such a meeting was not arranged this time because the President's stay in Japan was short and the Imperial couple was engaged in various events marking the Emperor's 20th anniversary of his ascension to the Chrysanthemum Throne.

15) Prime Minister Hatoyama apologizes to President Obama for leaving him behind in Japan

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Abridged slightly)
November 16, 2009

Mieko Kawashima, Singapore

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama exchanged words with President Barack Obama during a dinner party for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, held in Singapore on the night of Nov. 14 (the same, Japan time).

The Prime Minister apologized to the President leaving him behind in Japan when he departed for Singapore, saying, "I am sorry about that. I hope you are not tired." The President replied: "I am all right. I had the honor of having a lunch with the Emperor and the Empress, and my trip to Japan was terrific. I am grateful for the warm reception."

16) LDP policy chief Ishiba criticizes Prime Minister Hatoyama comments as "betrayal of trust"

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
November 16, 2009

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama indicated that a ministerial-level working group on the issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma would not discuss the issue based on the premise that the Futenma base will be relocated to the coastal area of Camp Schwab. Referring to this comment, Shigeru Ishiba, chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party Policy Research Council, criticized Hatoyama, saying, "This is a betrayal of trust (against the United States). If this is the case, the Japan-U.S. summit should not have been held." He said this to reporters yesterday in Tokyo. He also pointed out: "Diverging opinions in a meeting between the two countries could damage national interests. A decision on the issue should be made before the compilation of a state budget (at the end of the year)."

17) SDP head Fukushima says SOFA must be revised

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NIKKEI (Page 3) (Full)
November 14, 2009

State Minister for Consumer Affairs and Declining Birthrate Mizuho Fukushima, who heads the Social Democratic Party (SDP), appeared on a TBS program on the morning of Nov. 14. During the program, Fukushima said, "It is a problem that Japan cannot take suspects into custody before indictment," bearing in mind the recent hit-and-run incident in the village of Yomitan, Okinawa Prefecture, in which the involvement of a U.S. service member is suspected.

Fukushima reiterated her party's view that the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) must be revised, saying that the tripartite agreement among the Democratic Party of Japan, the SDP, and the People's New Party stipulates a plan to propose a revision of the SOFA.

18) Poll: Cabinet support slips to 62 PERCENT

ASAHI (Top play) (Abridged)
November 16, 2009

The rate of public support for Prime Minister Hatoyama's cabinet was 62 PERCENT in a telephone-based nationwide public opinion survey conducted by the Asahi Shimbun on Nov. 14-15, down slightly from the 65 PERCENT rating in the last survey, conducted Oct. 11-12. The nonsupport rate for the Hatoyama cabinet was 21 PERCENT (16 PERCENT in the last survey). Ratings for the Hatoyama cabinet's specific policies are not all high. However, the cabinet's basic stance received high ratings, as more than 70 PERCENT gave high marks to its efforts to reduce government waste.

Among those who support the ruling Democratic Party of Japan, the Hatoyama cabinet's approval rating has been high, over 90 PERCENT, since the survey conducted right after its inauguration in September (the survey before last). Among those with no particular party affiliation, however, the Hatoyama cabinet's support rate has been

declining, from 55 PERCENT in the survey before last, to 50 PERCENT in the last survey, to 39 PERCENT in the latest one.

Asked about the Hatoyama cabinet's efforts in specific areas, 48 PERCENT approved of its pension and healthcare policies, while 28 PERCENT did not. In the area of economic and job security measures, however, affirmative answers scored 37 PERCENT, while negative answers accounted for 38 PERCENT. In the area of foreign and defense policies as well, public opinion was split, with affirmative and negative answers accounting for 36 PERCENT each.

Meanwhile, when asked about the Hatoyama cabinet's efforts to reduce government waste, 76 PERCENT were affirmative, with 14 PERCENT negative. The figures seem to reflect the Government Revitalization Unit's budget screening that is currently underway. The Hatoyama cabinet is also trying to change politics that has depended on bureaucrats. In this area, affirmative answers scored 69 PERCENT, with negative answers accounting for 18 PERCENT.

In the survey, respondents were also asked about an intergovernmental agreement reached between Japan and the United States over the pending issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa Prefecture. To this question, only 28 PERCENT answered that it would be better to honor the agreement

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between Japan and the U.S., with 54 PERCENT saying it would be better to review the agreement and renegotiate with the United States.

The Hatoyama cabinet has decided to extend 450 billion yen in civilian aid to Afghanistan in lieu of discontinuing the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling activities in the Indian Ocean. Asked about this, 41 PERCENT were negative, with 38 PERCENT affirmative.

In the breakdown of public support for political parties, the DPJ stood at 46 PERCENT, with the opposition Liberal Democratic Party at 14 PERCENT. The DPJ's popularity remains high, scoring 46 PERCENT in the survey before last and 45 PERCENT in the last survey.

ROOS